WORLD AGRICULTURAL WEATHER HIGHLIGHTS
September 12, 2006

1 - UNITED STATES
August rains arrived too late to help many summer crops across the Plains and the South, following June-July heat and dryness. However, the Plains' August moisture began to revive drought-stressed pastures and was highly beneficial in preparation for winter wheat planting. Late-summer showers were not as widespread across the South, which continued to experience excessively hot weather. At month's end, however, rainfall associated with Tropical Storm Ernesto eased or eradicated drought in the middle and southern Atlantic States. Meanwhile in the Midwest, temperatures and soil moisture levels remained mostly favorable for corn and soybean development. Significant August rains were especially beneficial for soybeans in the previously dry western Corn Belt. Farther west, record-setting monsoon showers and flash flooding in the Four Corners States contrasted with hot, mostly dry conditions and significant wildfire activity in the Great Basin and the Northwest.

2 - CANADA
Across the Prairies, unseasonable warmth and dryness spurred rapid maturation and harvesting of spring grains and oilseeds during much of August and early September.

3 - SOUTH AMERICA
In Argentina, moisture levels remained unfavorably low in many southern and western wheat areas for normal development of crops approaching reproduction. In Brazil, an unusual September freeze caused potential damage to immature winter wheat in key growing areas of Parana and Rio Grande do Sul. The coldest weather stayed well south of the Brazilian coffee belt, although isolated growing areas may have experienced frost.

4 - EUROPE
Across central and eastern Europe, wet August weather disrupted winter and spring grain harvesting and reduced grain quality. However, the abundant rainfall favored filling summer crops and boosted topsoil moisture for early planting of the 2007 winter grain and oilseed crop. Elsewhere, dry weather reduced summer crop prospects on the Iberian Peninsula, while showers provided beneficial moisture for summer crops in southwestern France.

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(More details are available in the Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin at http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/pubs/index.htm)

5 - FSU-WESTERN
In August, periodic showers produced above-normal precipitation in northern Russia, slowing small grain harvesting and planting 2007 winter grain crops. The Southern District in Russia and eastern Ukraine experienced adverse heat and dryness, reducing prospects for filling corn and sunflowers. Since early September, showers continued to hamper fieldwork in parts of northern Russia but provided planting moisture for winter wheat in Ukraine and southern Russia.

6 - FSU-NEWLANDS
In August, near- to above-normal precipitation favored filling spring grains in Kazakhstan and most of Russia, although below-normal temperatures slowed crop development. Since early September, unseasonably warm, dry weather helped spring grain harvesting in Kazakhstan and adjacent areas in Russia.

7 - MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY
Below-normal August rainfall reduced soil moisture supplies for upcoming winter grain planting but favored cotton development.

8 - SOUTH ASIA
In August, locally excessive rain from central India westward into southern Pakistan adversely impacted open-boll cotton and caused flooding. However, the moisture benefited vegetative groundnuts and soybeans. Drier-than-normal weather in Bangladesh and northeastern India reduced topsoil moisture for heading rice. Generally dry weather also prevailed in southern India, increasing irrigation demands for vegetative to reproductive summer crops.

9 - EASTERN ASIA
In August, Typhoons Prapiroon and Saomai brought heavy showers to southeastern rice areas of China. Most of southern China received above-normal rainfall for the month, favoring rice but causing some flooding. A drought in Sichuan lowered yield prospects for crops. On the North China Plain, however, above-normal rainfall benefited reproductive corn, cotton, and soybeans. In Manchuria, below-normal rainfall reduced soil moisture for corn and soybeans in the early stages of reproduction. Tropical cyclones Wukong and Maria brought localized heavy rains to the southern coast of Japan, while below-normal rainfall prevailed on the Korean peninsula.

10 - SOUTHEAST ASIA
In August, monsoon showers began to increase, bringing above-normal rainfall to Thailand and Vietnam. The moisture favored rice and corn in Thailand, but likely caused flooding in Vietnam. Most of the Philippines received near- to above-normal rainfall, benefiting rice and corn, while above-normal rainfall in oil palm areas of Malaysia and Sumatra likely slowed harvest activities.

11 - AUSTRALIA
In August, near-normal rainfall in portions of western and eastern Australia benefited winter grains locally, but other areas received much less rainfall, hindering crop development. In southeastern Australia, unfavorably dry weather hampered winter wheat and barley development throughout most of the month.